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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS PRIORITY
BT
UNCLAS STATE 086936

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: XF

~~SUBJECT: TESTIMONY OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY RICHARD MURPHY~~

1. NEA ASSISTANT SECRETARY RICHARD MURPHY TESTIFIED IN OPEN SESSION BEFORE THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST MARCH 15. HIS TESTIMONY COVERED THE PEACE PROCESS, LEBANON, THE PERSIAN GULF AND ARMS SALES TO THE REGION. QUESTIONING FOCUSED ON THE SECRETARY'S PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL PEACE CONFERENCE. MURPHY EXPLAINED THAT THE PROPOSAL IS A CAREFULLY CRAFTED PACKAGE WHICH GIVES SOMETHING TO EACH PARTY, WHILE GIVING NO PARTY EVERYTHING IT WANTS. EACH PARTY WILL FEEL SOME PAIN, BUT IF IT IS TO SUCCEED, THE PROPOSAL MUST BE ACCEPTED OR REJECTED IN ITS ENTIRETY.

2. IN REPLY TO VARIOUS QUESTIONS MURPHY MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS. THE PRECISE ROLE OF THE CONFERENCE WILL BE WORKED OUT BY THE PARTICIPANTS. IT WILL NOT HAVE PLENIPOTENTIARY POWERS OR SERVE AS A COURT OF LAST RESORT. IT WILL BE ABLE TO RECEIVE REPORTS ON THE STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS, BUT NOT INTERFERE WITH THEM. THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL TAKE PLACE IN BILATERAL COMMITTEES.

3. THE PROPOSAL CONTAINS AN AMBITIOUS TIMETABLE AND IS DESIGNED TO PREVENT INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS FROM BECOMING PERMANENT. THE INTERLOCK BETWEEN STAGES IS THERE FOR THIS PURPOSE.

4. MURPHY SAID HE SAW NO CHANGE IN THE SOVIET POSITION ON AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND THAT MIDDLE EAST ISSUES WOULD BE DISCUSSED DURING SHEVARDNADZE'S MEETINGS HERE NEXT WEEK. MURPHY QUOTED LANGUAGE FROM THE SECRETARY'S MARCH 10 OBEY SUBCOMMITTEE TESTIMONY REGARDING A SOVIET ROLE AT THE CONFERENCE.

5. THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S ONLY ROLE WILL BE TO INVITE THE PARTICIPANTS. ALL FIVE PERMANENT SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS WILL BE INVITED TO AVOID A US/ISRAEL VS SOVIET/ARAB POLARIZATION. THE STATUS OF THE GOLAN HEIGHTS WILL BE SUBJECT TO NEGOTIATION IF SYRIA IS WILLING TO JOIN THE PROCESS. OUR POLICY ON JERUSALEM HAS NOT CHANGED.

6. MURPHY POINTED OUT THAT IF NEGOTIATIONS PROVE

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SUCCESSFUL, THEY WOULD NOT BE DERAILED BY ELECTIONS OR NEW GOVERNMENTS IN ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES. HE SAID THAT MOST ARABS ACCEPT THE EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL, BUT NOT THE OCCUPATION OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. WHILE THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT SUPPORT THE CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE, IT ANTICIPATES THAT NEW ARRANGEMENTS WOULD PROVIDE PALESTINIAN CONTROL OF THEIR OWN ECONOMY, COURTS AND POLICE. MURPHY EMPHASIZED THERE IS NO CHANGE IN OUR VIEW OF NEGOTIATING WITH THE PLO AND NO REVIEW OF THIS POLICY IS UNDERWAY.

7. MEMBERS ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER SOVIET STALLING ON AN ARMS EMBARGO OF IRAN, THE POSSIBILITY OF RENEWED SOVIET/SAUDI RELATIONS AND THIRD COUNTRY TRANSFERS OF EGYPTIAN MANUFACTURED M1A1 TANKS. REPRESENTATIVE GILLMAN ASKED ABOUT THE 23 MILLION DOLLARS INTENDED FOR WEST BANK DEVELOPMENT AND EXPRESSED HIS HOPE THAT REPROGRAMING OF THESE FUNDS WOULD MOVE FORWARD QUICKLY.

8. THE TEXT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY MURPHY'S PREPARED STATEMENT WAS TRANSMITTED IN THE MARCH 15 WIRELESS FILE. SHULTZ
END OF MESSAGE UNCLASSIFIED

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